REMARKS

Claim 1 is pending in the present application. Claims 2 - 12 are canceled by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

As mentioned above, Applicants are canceling claims 2 - 12. Applicants are not conceding that the subject matter encompassed by claims 2 - 12 is not patentable. Applicants are canceling claims 2 - 12 solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of claim 1. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to prosecute claims 2 - 12, or other claims, in one or more continuing applications.

In section 2 of the Office Action, claim 1 is objected to because of informalities. Applicants are amending claim 1 to address the informalities. A withdrawal of the objection is respectfully solicited.

In section 4 of the Office Action, claims 2, 3, 7, 8 and 12 are rejected. Claims 2, 3, 7, 8 and 12 are now canceled, thus rendering moot the rejection thereof. A withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In section 7 of the Office Action, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0087647 to Quine et al. (hereinafter "the Quine et al. publication")[1], in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0013817 to Collins et al. (hereinafter "the Collins et al. publication"), in view of an article entitled "Setting up Catch All Email" (hereinafter "Setting up Catch All Email"), and further in view of an article by Sherwood entitled, "Finding Someone's Email Address", (hereinafter "the Sherwood article"). Applicants are traversing this rejection.

Claim 1 provides for a computerized method for determining a desired recipient's email address. The method includes, *inter alia*:

f. sending a probe email addressed to a known invalid email address;

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[1] The Office Action merely refers to "Quine", but does not provide a publication number. Applicants are assuming that the reference to "Quine" is a reference to U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0087647, as cited in an office action dated 26 MAR 2008.

g. monitoring a response of a target recipient email server for a unique server address to
   determine if a bounce to the sending of the probe email occurs; and

h. recording that the email address cannot be found if no bounce to the sending of the probe email
   occurs.

Applicants wish for the Examiner to note that step (f) involves sending the probe email, and that the three above-noted steps are performed by the sender of the probe email. The purpose of the three steps is to allow the sender to determine how the target recipient email server responds to a receipt of an invalid email addresses. If the target recipient email server responds to an invalid email address by issuing a bounce, the sender can thereafter determine whether a guessed email address is valid or invalid. The determination works as follows:

Assume that the sender sends a probe email to a known invalid email address at the target recipient email server.

If the sender of the probe email receives a bounce in response to the probe email address, the sender can conclude that a receipt of a bounce means that an email address is invalid.

If the sender of the probe email does not receive a bounce in response to the probe email address, the sender cannot draw any conclusion regarding the validity of an email address. This is because the target recipient email server behaves the same way (i.e., by doing nothing) regardless of whether an email address is valid or invalid.

The Office Action, on page 6, recognizes that the combination of the Quine et al. publication and the Collins et al. publication does not disclose "f. sending a probe email addressed to a known invalid email address". Accordingly, the Office Action asserts that Setting up Catch All Mail, at page 3, lines 1 - 5, discloses this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion.

Setting up Catch All Email is directed to a feature of a system that employs a default email address to "catch all mail" that is addressed to a particular domain (page 1, lines 1 – 4). Thus, the "catch all mail" feature is

performed by a <u>recipient</u> of an email. Setting up Catch All Mail, at page 3, lines 1 - 5, i.e., the passage cited in the Office Action, is describing activities that occur at a result of "Disabling your 'Catch All Feature' ", as is introduced in the middle of page 2. Specifically, the user of the "catch all mail" feature disables the feature by forwarding all caught to an invalid email address, e.g., ******>>>@yourdomain.com. The user of the "catch all mail" feature <u>will not receive any response</u> to the forwarded email. Thus, <u>the forwarded email is not a probe email</u>. Hence, Setting up Catch All Email does not disclose **sending a probe email** addressed to a known invalid email address, as recited in claim 1.

With further regard to claim 1, the Office Action, on page 7, recognizes that the combination of the Quine et al. publication, the Collins et al. publication, and Setting up Catch All Email does not disclose "h. recording that the email address cannot be found if no bounce to the sending of the probe email occurs". Accordingly, the Office Action asserts that the Sherwood article, at page 4, Guessing Strategies, lines 1 - 4, discloses this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion.

The Sherwood article, at page 4, Guessing Strategies, lines 1 - 4, states:

> You can also try guessing at an email address. The worst that can happen is that
> you'll reach someone else who might get very confused (and/or not answer).

Although this passage may be describing a situation in which no bounce occurs, it <u>does not describe any particular conclusion that can be drawn</u> by the absence of a bounce. Moreover, it is describing a situation in which a user is attempting to guess <u>a valid email address, not an invalid email address</u>. Thus, the Sherwood article does not disclose or suggest **recording that the email address cannot be found** if no bounce to the sending of the probe email (to the <u>known invalid email address</u>) occurs, as recited in claim 1.

In summary, Applicants submit that the cited combination of the Quine et al. publication, the Collins et al. publication, Setting up Catch All Email, and the Sherwood article, does not disclose or suggest:

> f. **sending a probe email** addressed to a known invalid email address;
> g. monitoring a response of a target recipient email server for a unique server address to
>   determine if a bounce to the sending of the probe email occurs; and

h. **recording that the email address cannot be found** if no bounce to the sending of the probe email occurs,

as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of references.
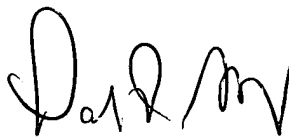
Applicants are requesting reconsideration and a withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claim 1.

In section 9 of the Office Action, claim 12 is rejected. Claim 12 is now canceled, thus rendering moot the rejection thereof. A withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In section 11 of the Office Action, claims 2 - 11 are rejected. Claims 2 - 11 are now canceled, thus rendering moot the rejection thereof. A withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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